

How do I know if I am a victim of domestic violence under this law? Should I call the police? Will anyone be arrested? What should I do if I have a restraining order and my abuser still doesn't leave me alone? What legal remedies can I seek if I have been a victim of domestic violence?

What is a civil complaint? How can I get a temporary restraining order? Where must I file for a temporary restraining order? How long will I have to wait to see a judge? What will I have to do when I file for my TRO through the police? Will I have to go back to the court at any time? Do I have to speak at the final hearing? How do I file a criminal complaint?

If I file criminal charges, what can I expect before the case goes to trial? Will I have to testify? Will I need a lawyer to handle these procedures? How do I know if I am a victim of domestic violence under this law? Should I call the police? Will anyone be arrested? What should I do if I have a restraining order and my abuser still doesn't leave me alone?

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This booklet is intended as a guide for victims of domestic violence and does not constitute legal advice. It was issued in January 2004 and reflects laws in effect at that time.

You have a legal right to be free from physical harm, abuse and threats in your personal domestic life. The New Jersey law that offers you this protection is called The Prevention of Domestic Violence Act of 1990 and is considered to be the strongest in the country. If you live in fear for your personal safety, you should know what actions you can take and what legal remedies are available to you. This booklet is designed to give you that information.

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THE LAW: THE PREVENTION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ACT

The Prevention of Domestic Violence Act applies to a person 18 years of age or older or a person who is an emancipated minor* that has been subjected to domestic violence by a spouse, former spouse, or any other person who is a present or former household member. A "victim of domestic violence" also includes any person, regardless of age, who has been subjected to domestic violence by a person with whom the victim has a child, or with whom the victim anticipates having a child, if one of the parties is pregnant. "Victim of domestic violence" also includes any person who has been subjected to domestic violence by a person with whom the victim has had a dating relationship.

This means you are a victim of domestic violence if you or the abuser are the parents of any children, whether or not you have ever lived together; you are pregnant with the abuser's child; you and the abuser now live together or have lived together in the past; or you and the abuser now have or did have, at one time, a dating relationship.

You and the abuser do not have to be married or be girlfriend/boyfriend. He or she can be a family member, your gay or lesbian partner, your roommate, your caretaker, or any other adult who lives with you now or has lived with you.

**Emancipated minor is a person who is under 18 years of age but who has been married, has entered military service, has a child or is pregnant or has been previously declared by a court or an administrative agency to be emancipated.*

How do I know if I am a victim of domestic violence under this law?

You are a victim of domestic violence if you have experienced any of the following from a person who is over the age of 18 or an emancipated minor:

1. beatings or physical attacks such as kicking, slapping, punching, pushing, hair pulling, or any other physical attack in any other way that causes you harm or fear of harm;
2. threats that make you fear serious injury to yourself or your children (example: "When I come home I'm going to kick you, punch the kids, hurt you.");
3. threats that make you fear for your life (example: "If you don't do what I tell you to do, I'm going to kill you.");
4. imprisonment within your own home or at another location (example: A person locks you in your home, in a room, in a closet, in an automobile, for any period of time);

5. kidnapping (example: You are taken against your will from your home, place of business, or anywhere else and not permitted to leave.);
6. sexually assaulted where you are forced to have sexual contact or raped under threats of harm to yourself or someone else. This can also include unwanted sexual touching or if the perpetrator exposes his genitals.;
7. damage to your personal property;
8. forced entry into your home, with or without a weapon;
9. theft of your personal belongings;
10. threats against you with a weapon such as a gun, knife, machete, baseball bat, or any other object that you feel can harm you;
11. repeated verbal humiliation and attacks (example: A person calls you obscene names, or calls you stupid, ignorant, dumb, ugly, or other disrespectful names);
12. stalking you by actions done more than one time that include maintaining you in his sight, repeatedly being in physical proximity to you, repeatedly conveying verbal or written threats or threats implied by his actions, or all of these actions, and these actions cause you to fear bodily injury to you or a member of your family or to fear the death of you or a member of your family.

***If the person who has committed the above acts against you is a minor and not emancipated, his or her actions should be reported to the police and a criminal complaint filed.*

THE POLICE

Should I call the police?

YES! Domestic violence is a serious crime and the police must respond to your calls — **no matter how many times you call them**. Under the Prevention of Domestic Violence Act, it is the primary duty of the police officer who responds to a domestic violence call to enforce the law and to protect the victim. The law requires that all law enforcement officers and judicial personnel receive training in domestic violence.

The police are required by law to help you and to give you information about your rights. Among other things, the police must write a report. Be sure to tell the officer all the details. Read the report carefully and correct any mistakes. **Be sure to get the officer's name and badge number.**

Will anyone be arrested?

A police officer must arrest the person you state perpetrated the acts of domestic violence against you, even if you do not want her/him arrested and even if you do not want to file a complaint against the person who committed these acts, if: (1) you exhibit any signs of injury; (2) the perpetrator has violated a previous Domestic Violence Restraining Order; (3) there is probable cause that a weapon has been involved in the commission of the act of domestic violence; (4) there is a warrant for the abuser's arrest on any other charge.

A police officer may arrest the person who committed the act of domestic violence against you if you exhibit no visible signs of injury but you have told him/her what happened and have advised him/her that an injury has occurred. The injuries could be internal and painful or the injury could be on an area of your body that you do not feel comfortable exposing to the officer.

If you act with reasonable force to protect yourself from the attacker, and you and the attacker both show signs of injury, you should not be arrested or charged with a domestic violence offense. The officer at the scene should consider the nature and extent of the injuries, along with any previous history of reported domestic violence incidents.

It is very important for you to tell the police officer if weapons were used to injure you or threaten you, and where the weapons are located.

It is very important for you to tell the police officer what happened, what your injuries are and if there were previous acts of domestic violence against you by your attacker or previous reports of attacks, or if there is a Domestic Violence Order already in place.

What if a weapon was used during an act of domestic violence?

If a police officer at the scene has reason to believe a weapon was used during an act of domestic violence, the officer must arrest the suspect and seize any weapons on the premises that could expose you to further harm. The officer must also sign a criminal complaint in this instance.

Seized weapons are turned over to the county prosecutor's office. If the prosecutor does not institute a legal action within 45 days to retain the weapon(s) seized, they may be returned to the owner.

What should I do if I have a restraining order and my abuser still doesn't leave me alone?

If you have a Domestic Violence Restraining Order and your abuser violates the terms (example: mails a letter to you or has someone else deliver a letter to you; calls you on the telephone; appears at your place of work, home, school or restaurant where you are eating, and does not immediately leave when he sees you), **call the police immediately. Have your copy of the restraining order ready to show the police.** Your abuser can be arrested and jailed. **You have the right to call the police as many times as you need to when you are in danger from your attacker, whether or not you have a Domestic Violence Restraining Order.**

It is very important for you to carry a copy of the Domestic Violence Restraining Order with you at all times.

What if the police don't come fast enough or refuse to come?

You must be prepared when dealing with a violent person. You should have access to a telephone at all times. Carry a cell phone if possible. If you don't have a phone, try to establish a relationship with a neighbor or relative who will call the police for you when you need help. Remember you are not alone. It is imperative that you tell a neighbor or relative about the violence for your protection and the protection of your children in the event that the police do not come or do not come fast enough.

If the police are taking too much time to respond and you remain in danger, call your local domestic violence hotline (1-800 572-SAFE). A worker for the domestic violence hotline can put you on hold while someone calls the police and advocates on your behalf to respond quickly to your situation.

You should have a safety plan in the event that the police do not come or do not come quickly enough. If all else fails, draw on your own resourcefulness either to escape the danger or attract attention by screaming for help or setting off the security alarm.

REMEMBER: You have the right to be protected by the law and the police are required to provide that protection. These provisions of the law are designed to prevent further acts of domestic violence.

THE LEGAL PROCESS

What legal remedies can I seek if I have been a victim of domestic violence?

You have the right to file a civil complaint under the Prevention of Domestic Violence Act, along with a criminal complaint. Both complaints should be filed for your protection since the civil complaint is designed to protect you and the criminal complaint is designed to punish the abuser.

What is a civil complaint?

In a civil action you are asking the court to resolve a conflict between you and the person abusing you. You are not asking the court to punish that person for breaking the law. One of the protections available to you in a civil action is a civil restraining order.

What is a civil restraining order?

A civil restraining order is a legally enforceable document that, among other things, limits the physical contact between you and the person abusing you. When you first sign a complaint for a restraining order, and if you meet all the criteria under the Prevention of Domestic Violence Act, you will receive a "Temporary Restraining Order" (TRO). The abuser will not have to be present to obtain the TRO. Within approximately 10 days you will appear in court at a hearing and tell the judge what happened to cause you to sign the complaint against your abuser and the judge will decide whether or not to give you a Final Restraining Order. The abuser will be present during this hearing, but sheriff's officers will protect you.

How can I get a temporary restraining order (TRO)?

Between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, go to the court clerk in the Family Part of your county's Superior Court at the County Courthouse and tell a court employee that you are there to file a TRO. A family

court intake employee will give you papers to fill out and ask you to describe what happened during the most recent domestic violence incident. You can ask if there is someone there who can assist you in preparing the papers, which contain a complaint and statement against your abuser. Ask the intake person to explain what will happen when you go into the courtroom.

On weekdays between 4 p.m. and 8:30 a.m. the next day, and on weekends and holidays, you must go to your police department to obtain a TRO through a municipal court judge. The police usually take the information for the complaint and call the judge to advise what has occurred. The judge may wish to speak to you on the phone. Then the judge will issue a TRO if he or she thinks you are in danger.

Who issues a temporary restraining order?

A TRO must be issued by a Domestic Violence Hearing Officer or by a judge from the municipal court or a judge from the Family Part of the Superior Court at the county courthouse.

If you are denied a TRO by a municipal court judge, you may immediately reapply (8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday) to the Family Part of the Superior Court based upon the same incident of domestic violence.

Where must I file for a temporary restraining order?

You may file in the county where the domestic violence occurred, where you live, where the abuser lives or where you are sheltered.

What do I put in the complaint?

It is very important that you carefully read each part of the complaint before completing it. You must list all facts of the incident that happened that made you file the complaint. For example, facts like: "hit; punched; threatened to kill me; cursed; pulled hair; burned with cigarettes; threw chair, knife, fork at me; followed me to work, home, school, store" should be included, if they happened.

If the abuser used a weapon to hurt or attempt to hurt you include this in the complaint.

It is also very important to include previous acts of violence/abuse against you in the complaint. Something else to include is if the abuser has a criminal history or if he has been arrested previously.

Under the section marked "Relief" read the requests carefully and then check or tell the intake worker to check the box that states what you want from the court. For example:

- ☐ That the abuser's weapons be seized.
- ☐ That the abuser is temporarily forbidden to have contact with you, your children, your relatives, and other people you identify as being at risk.
- ☐ That the abuser is temporarily forbidden to enter the location where the violence happened and the home you share with him.
- ☐ That you are granted sole possession of the home you shared with the abuser.
- ☐ That you are granted temporary sole custody of the children.
- ☐ That the abuser temporarily support you and your children.
- ☐ That you have temporary possession of a car, a key to the car and residence, a health insurance card, a checkbook, passport for yourself and your children, immigration documents, birth certificates, or other things you might need.
- ☐ That the abuser have either no visitation with the children or supervised visitation.
- ☐ That a risk evaluation be conducted before any visitation is ordered by the court if the children have been abused by the abuser.
- ☐ That the abuser pay you for any losses, such as moving expenses, lawyer's fees, medical bills, lost wages, or money spent to repair damage to your property.
- ☐ That the abuser pay for your pain and suffering.
- ☐ That the abuser be ordered to go to psychological counseling, counseling for substance abuse (alcohol/drugs) with a counselor who is a certified domestic violence counselor.

The intake worker or domestic violence advocate will assist you in completing the complaint. If there is no one to help you, you can fill it out yourself, but read it carefully to make sure you don't miss anything.

You will need the name and address of the abuser, and a description, along with his date of birth, social security number and the name and address of his employer if you know them. This information is necessary so the complaint can be served to the abuser.

Can I get a restraining order if I am sick and confined to bed, or if I have a physical or mental disability?

Yes. A judge may issue a TRO upon sworn testimony or complaint of a person who represents a person who is physically or mentally incapable of filing.

Where must I file for a temporary restraining order?

You may file in the county where the domestic violence occurred, where you live, where the abuser lives or where you are sheltered.

How long will I have to wait to see a judge?

There is no way to tell how long it will take for you to see a judge on any particular day. Go to the courthouse as early as possible. You may have to spend an entire work day at the courthouse, so notify your employer beforehand. Be prepared in the event your wait is a long one. Arrange for a safe place for your children to stay while you are in court.

What will I have to do when I file for my TRO through the police?

The police will help you file a written complaint that explains what happened. The police officer will call a judge and read your complaint. The judge should speak with you, and perhaps ask you a few more questions, before he or she decides whether or not to issue a TRO on your behalf.

If your TRO is denied, call the hotline of your local domestic violence program for other options that are available to you. You are entitled to a review of this denial by a Superior Court judge. If you are denied a TRO and continue to feel unsafe at home, the domestic hotline can help make arrangements for you to stay in a safe place.

What happens if I receive a temporary restraining order at the courthouse or through the police and the municipal judge?

A TRO is a legal document. It will contain the orders of the judge. You will receive a copy that **you are to keep in your possession at all times**. The police department receives a copy, the court receives a copy, and the defendant must be served with notice that he or she is not allowed to have contact with you until the court schedules another hearing, usually within 10 days. At this second hearing, you and the abuser will have a chance to testify. The judge will consider both testimonies before issuing a Final Restraining Order.

What happens after I file the complaint and papers with the court and get a TRO?

The sheriff of your county will attempt to serve the abuser at the places you have told them they can find him. The abuser must be served with the papers so he or she knows to stay away from you and your children and others you have requested he or she stay away from in your complaint.

Will I have to go back to the court at any time?

Within 10 days of the date of the TRO you will have to appear in court for the final hearing. The abuser may also be in court at this time, and the judge will give him or her a chance to tell his or her side of the story. There will be protection for you in the courtroom and in the courthouse. If you are fearful because the abuser is there, tell the court officer. If you need an escort out of the Courthouse because you are afraid of the defendant, ask the court officer to get a sheriff's officer to escort you.

Do I have to go back to court if I choose to dismiss the civil complaint?

YES. If you want to dismiss the civil complaint, you must go to court on the scheduled hearing date. You will be asked to explain your reasons for wanting to dismiss the complaint. The judge will want to know that you are doing this without threats or pressure from someone else. If the judge is convinced that this is your own decision, the complaint will be dismissed.

What will I need to bring with me to court?

At the time of the final hearing you should bring proof of the amount of money you need from the defendant as support if he or she has an obligation to support you. Proof includes: cancelled checks or a lease or other documents that show the amount of your rent or mortgage, utility bills, the latest income tax returns or pay stubs and any other information to prove how much money you need from the abuser.

Do I have to speak at the hearing?

At the final hearing you will tell the judge what the abuser did to you that caused you to file for a TRO. You will tell the judge if the abuser hit you, punched you, kicked you, pushed you, etc. If you are afraid of the abuser you will tell the judge this and why you are fearful. You will tell the judge about other times when the abuser hurt you or made you afraid or threatened you in any way. You must not be afraid of the judge because he or she is there to help you and to keep you safe from harm.

You will also tell the judge how much money you will need for support from the abuser if he or she has an obligation to support you and your children. You will show the judge the proof of how much you need for housing and food and other things for you and your children.

What steps do I take after I receive a final restraining order?

You will receive a copy of the Final Restraining Order after the hearing. It is important to keep a copy with you at all times. It is important that you do the following:

- Review the order before you leave the courtroom. If something is wrong or missing ask the court clerk to correct the order before you leave.
- Make several copies of the order to leave in safe places in case you need them. Keep one at your job, one at your home, one at your children's school, babysitter or day care program.
- Give a copy to a neighbor that you trust.
- Give a copy to friends or relatives who are named and protected in the order.

- Make sure your local police have a copy of the order.
- Give a copy to the security guard where you live or work.
- Change your locks as soon as possible.
- Change your telephone number as soon as possible to an unlisted number.

Do I also have the right to file a criminal complaint if I choose?

YES. A criminal complaint accuses the abuser of committing a crime. The New Jersey Prevention of Domestic Violence Act lists acts that are considered to be crimes against the victim. They are:

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| 1. Homicide | 8. Criminal Sexual Contact |
| 2. Assault (both simple assault and aggravated assault) | 9. Lewdness |
| 3. Terroristic Threats | 10. Criminal Mischief |
| 4. Kidnapping | 11. Burglary |
| 5. Criminal Restraints | 12. Criminal Trespass |
| 6. False Imprisonment | 13. Harassment |
| 7. Sexual Assault | 14. Stalking |

Should I file criminal charges if I have already filed for a restraining order and received this protection?

You should discuss with a domestic violence advocate the issue of whether to file a criminal complaint against your abuser. However, **you should make your own decision about filing a criminal charge against the abuser.** You have been the victim of a criminal act by someone with whom you have or once had a relationship. A criminal act is not permitted between any two people regardless of their relationship to each other.

Domestic violence is recognized as a serious life-threatening crime. The Prevention of Domestic Violence Act was enacted to protect you. It is your right to use the law.

How do I file a criminal complaint?

You usually begin the process at your police department or your local municipal court. From this point, the process is different, depending on the crime and the county where the crime has taken place. In some cases the police will issue a warrant for arrest. In other cases a court summons will be issued.

The case will either proceed through the municipal court system or be handed over to the county prosecutor's office. A case screening may be scheduled. If you receive notice about a case screening, make sure you call the phone number on the notice the day before the scheduled screening to find out what has happened to your charges. Sometimes charges will be reduced, depending upon the evidence in the case. It is important to keep in touch with the prosecutor's office or municipal court, and provide whatever they need to resolve your case.

REMINDER: Criminal complaints and violations of a restraining order complaints must be filed and prosecuted in the county where the offense took place. This is different than the filing for a civil restraining order. Civil restraining orders can be filed in several different places: where you live or are sheltered, where the abuser lives or where the domestic violence took place.

Is there anything I need to do if I file a criminal complaint?

All criminal cases require evidence. This is why it is important for you to seek treatment for any physical or emotional injuries you have suffered at the hands of the attacker. For example, if the attacker has given you a black eye, take a photograph of your black eye. It would also help if you tell a medical professional, either your private doctor or someone in a hospital clinic or emergency room, how you received this injury or why you have become so emotionally upset. If you are on welfare, or if your family is working with the Division of Youth and Family Services, tell your social worker what happened. You can also call your local domestic violence hotline if you need help and support. (See Helpful Numbers on page 17 of this booklet.)

REMINDER: If you are physically injured, ask the doctor or nurse to document your injury, how it happened, and to include photos of your injury in your medical record. These records may be useful to you if you choose to take legal action. Even if you choose not to file criminal charges at that time, it is still important to have a record of what was done to you.

If I file criminal charges, what can I expect before the case goes to trial?

After you have filed criminal charges, the abuser will probably be released from custody on bail, or on his or her own word. According to the law, the court that releases the abuser (the defendant) on bail may require him or her to follow certain rules. These rules are listed in a bail order, which, like the civil restraining order, is a legally enforceable document.

The rules on the bail may include prohibiting the defendant from having any contact with you. This includes prohibiting the defendant from entering your home, place of work or school, or harassing you or your relatives.

If you and the abuser are living together, the judge releasing the defendant may allow him or her to return home to pick up personal belongings. **Ask the judge to limit the time the defendant can stay, and ask that a police escort supervise him or her while there.** The court clerk, or your lawyer if you have one, must give you a copy of this bail order. Keep it in a safe place. You may need it if the defendant does not obey the bail order. If the abuser is released on bail, you have the right to be notified of this release. Law enforcement authorities will attempt to notify you of the release.

Will I have to testify?

YES. A court hearing will be scheduled as soon as possible on your charges, and you will have to testify. If the defendant is found guilty, the judge will sentence him or her. The sentence will depend on the facts in the case. As part of the sentence, the judge may order the defendant to continue obeying the bail order. This is called a sentencing order. In addition, as part of the sentencing order, the judge may require the defendant to get professional counseling.

What happens if a bail order or sentencing order is not obeyed?

If the abuser does not obey the terms of the bail order or the sentencing order, he or she can be arrested and put in jail. **Call the police if a violation occurs.** Have your copy ready to show the police when they arrive.

Will I need a lawyer to handle these procedures?

The New Jersey Prevention of Domestic Violence Act was written so you can do everything yourself, which is called "*pro se*" in legal terms. There are times when you may want to consult a lawyer, especially if you are considering a divorce because of an abusive and threatening marital relationship. You may contact a lawyer through your county legal services office or county bar association lawyer referral service. Also, your local domestic violence program may know of lawyers with particular expertise in domestic violence.

BE PREPARED FOR EMERGENCIES

Steps for your protection

If you have experienced abuse, or if you fear the threat of abuse, you may want to be prepared in case it is necessary for you and your children, to leave home quickly. Here are some basic steps you can take beforehand:

- Pack a suitcase with a change of clothes for yourself and your children, along with some personal articles such as a comb, toothbrush, etc. Also include an extra set of car keys, money, personal papers such as Social Security cards or numbers, your driver's license, marriage certificate, any restraining orders, documentation of car ownership, plus any savings and checking account books. Store the suitcase in the home of a friend or neighbor, at work or hide it in your house where it won't be found by anyone and where you can get to it easily.
- Make a list of names and telephone numbers of police, friends, family, local shelters or your employer. Keep this list at work and in the suitcase.
- Plan for transportation to a safe place.
- **PLAN AHEAD.** You can get advice and counseling from the domestic violence program nearest you. (Numbers for shelters in all 21 counties are located on page 17 of this booklet.) You may also call 1-800 572-SAFE for a bilingual toll-free hotline. **This hotline is accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It is also TDD accessible.**

- Domestic violence programs offer various services, including emergency shelter, court advocacy, counseling, crisis hotlines, children's programs, support groups and referrals. Make sure you are in a safe place when you call for help and guidance.
- Sometimes the abuse and the violence will get worse after you take some protective action like calling the police or going to a shelter. **Be aware that this can happen.** Proceed with safety in mind, whatever you choose to do.
- **IF YOU NEED IMMEDIATE HELP, CALL THE POLICE OR 911.** (911 calls are recorded and can be used as irrefutable evidence in trials.)
- If you would like to consult a lawyer and don't know how to find one, contact your local county bar association's lawyer referral service. Look under "Lawyer Referral Service" in the yellow pages of your phone book. They may charge a small fee. You can also contact your county's legal aid society. It is a good idea to obtain these numbers in advance. Keep them with you in your wallet or in a small address book.

Remember:
There is
NO Excuse
for Abuse

HELPFUL NUMBERS

Domestic Violence Hotline
800-572-SAFE
(statewide, confidential, bilingual,
TDD-accessible)

Statewide Women's Referral Center
800-322-8092 (24 hours)

New Jersey Violent Crimes
Compensation Board
800-242-0804 Victim-Witness Hotline

New Jersey Coalition for
Battered Women
609-584-8107 www.njcbw.org

New Jersey Coalition Against
Sexual Assault
609-631-4450

New Jersey Division on Women
Sexual Assault Hotline
800-601-7200

State Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy
609-588-7900

Division on Civil Rights
609-292-4605

Division on Women, Office on the
Prevention of Violence Against Women
609-292-8840

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES (by County)

Atlantic County

Atlantic County Women's Center,
Violence Intervention Program (VIP)
24-hour hotline: 609-646-6767
Tollfree: 800-286-4184

Bergen County

Shelter Our Sisters
24-hour hotline: 201-944-9600

Alternatives to Domestic Violence
24-hour hotline: 201-336-7575

Burlington County

Providence House/Willingboro Shelter
24-hour hotline: 609-871-7551

Camden County

Camden County Women's Center
24-hour hotline: 856-227-1234

Cape May County

CARA, Inc. (Coalition Against Rape &
Abuse, Inc.)
24-hour hotline: 609-522-6489
Tollfree: 877-294-CARA (2272)

Cumberland County

Cumberland County Women's Center
24-hour hotline: 856-691-3713
Tollfree: 800-286-4353

Essex County

Family Violence Program
24-hour hotline: 973-484-4446

The Safe House
24-hour hotline: 973-759-2154

The Rachel Coalition of
Jewish Family Service
24-hour hotline: 973-765-9050

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES (continued)

Linda & Rudy Slucker National Council
of Jewish Women, Center for Women
Office: 973-994-4994

Gloucester County

Gloucester County Women's Services
24-hour hotline: 866-GCDV-SAFE
(866-423-8723)

Hudson County

Women Rising, Inc.,
Battered Women's Program
24-hour hotline: 201-333-5700

Hunterdon County

Women's Crisis Services
24-hour hotline: 908-788-7666

Mercer County

Womenspace, Inc.
24-hour hotline: 800-572-SAFE (7233)
State hotline: 609-394-9000

Middlesex County

Women Aware, Inc.
24-hour hotline: 732-249-4504

Batterers Services,
Family Violence Program
Phone: 732-257-6100

Monmouth County

180 Turning Lives Around
24-hour hotline: 732-264-4111
Tollfree: 888-The-WCMC
(888-843-9262)

Rape Care Program
24-hour hotline: 732-264-7273
Tollfree: 888-264-RAPE (7273)

Morris County

Jersey Battered Women's
Services, Inc. (JBWS)
24-hour hotline: 973-267-4763

Ocean County

Providence House-Ocean
24-hour hotline: 732-244-8259
Tollfree: 800-246-8910

Passaic County

Passaic County Women's Center,
Domestic Violence Program
24-hour hotline: 973-881-1450

Salem County

Salem County Women's Services
24-hour hotline: 856-935-6655
Tollfree: 888-632-9511

Somerset County

Resource Center for Women
and Their Families
24-hour hotline: 908-685-1122

Sussex County

Domestic Abuse Services, Inc.
24-hour hotline: 973-875-1211
Domestic Violence Assessment Center
of Sussex County
Batterers Intervention Program
Phone: 973-579-9666

Union County

Project Protect
24-hour hotline: 908-355-4357

Batterers Services, Men
Against Violence
Phone: 908-355-1500

Alternatives for Men-Batterers Services
Phone: 908-272-0304

Warren County
Domestic Abuse & Rape Crisis
Center (DARCC)
24-hour hotline: 908-475-8408
Tollfree: 866-6BE-SAFE
(866-623-7233)

CHECKLIST FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic violence is not limited to physical abuse. It also includes emotional and sexual abuse. Following are examples of common forms of domestic violence, but this is by no means a complete list. Use this information to help you document the abuse for legal purposes, such as restraining orders or divorce, or to remind you of the realities of the relationship in order to help you assess your safety.

Physical Abuse

Has the abuser ever:

- Spit at you?
- Thrown things at you?
- Pulled your hair?
- Bitten or scratched you?
- Burned you?
- Cut you?
- Pushed, shoved or grabbed you?
- Kicked or thrown you down?
- Slapped you with an open hand?
- Punched you with a closed fist?
- Tried to choke/strangle you?
- Assaulted you with a weapon?
- Beaten you while you were pregnant?
- Been violent toward the children?
- Physically abused family pets?

Sexual Abuse

Has the abuser ever:

- Forced you to have sex when you didn't want to?
- Forced you to perform unwanted sexual acts, or to have sex with other people or to use objects?
- Forced you to have sex after abusing you physically or emotionally?

Has the abuse gotten worse or become more frequent in the past year?

Threats

Has the abuser ever:

- Threatened to hurt you?
- Threatened to kill you?
- Threatened to hurt or kill a member of your family?
- Threatened to hurt or kill a family pet?
- Driven recklessly when you were in the car knowing that it scared you?
- Threatened to flee with the children?
- Threatened to commit suicide, or made a suicide attempt?

Has the abuser ever been treated for a mental health condition?

Have the threats gotten worse or more frequent in the past year?

Other Abusive Behavior

Has the abuser ever:

- Threatened to prevent you from leaving?
- Physically kept you from leaving by doing such things as blocking a doorway, taking your car keys, or disabling your car?
- Locked you in a room?
- Forced you to go anywhere against your will?
- Purposely or repeatedly followed or stalked you by doing things such as staking out your home or place of employment?
- Come to your home uninvited, or after being told not to?
- Broken into your home with the intention of assaulting you or stealing from you?

- Purposely or recklessly damaged your property or possessions by doing such things as punching holes in the walls, ripping up personal journals, tearing your clothing?
- Harassed you by purposely and repeatedly annoying or alarming you by making hang-up calls, calling your home or place of employment, or deliberately preventing you from sleeping?

Emotional Abuse

Has the abuser ever:

- Called you humiliating or demeaning names?
- Treated you like a household servant?
- Withheld money, the checkbook, credit cards?
- Tried to control your daily activities such as:
 - where you go?
 - what you do?
 - who your friends are?
- Isolated you from family and friends?

Is the abuser especially possessive or jealous, saying things such as, "If I can't have you, no one can?"

Has the abuse gotten worse or become more frequent in the past year?

Substance Abuse

How often does the abuser drink alcohol?

- daily
- weekly
- once a month or less

Does the abuser's alcohol use affect your daily life?

Does the abuser ever abuse prescription drugs?

Does the abuser use illegal drugs?

Did any of the abusive incidents occur when the abuser was drunk or high?

Has the substance abuse worsened in the past year?

This checklist was provided courtesy of the New Jersey State Division on Women.



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